

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 ABIDJA 01606 181709Z

21

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 NEA-07 IO-03 L-01 H-01

INR-05 PM-03 PRS-01 SP-02 NSC-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 /055 W

----- 005283

R 181530Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7142

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMCONGEN CAPETOWN

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USUN NEW YORK 326

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

CONFIDENTIAL ABIDJAN 1606

LIMDIS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ABIDJA 01606 181709Z

CAPETOWN PASS EMBASSY

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IV, AO

SUB: FUTHER BACKGROUND ON IVORY COAST RECOGNITION OF
MPLA--TALK WITH FOREIGN MINISTER

REFERENCE ABIDJAN 1527

1. SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER CONFIRMED THAT GOIC'S ACTION IN RECOGNITION OF MPLA CAME AS RESULT OF INABILITY OF USG TO LIVE UP TO ITS DECLARED INTENTION OF OFFSETTING SOVIET/CUBAN STRENGTH IN ANGOLA. ANGOLAN DEFEAT REPRESENTED SET-BACK FOR U.S. AND FOR AFRICAN MODERATES, AND TREMENDOUS VICTORY FOR SOVIETS, WITH WORRISOME IMPLICATIONS FOR ZAIRE, ZAMBIA, NAMIBIA AND REST OF AFRICA. GOIC IS RETHINKING ITS OWN POSITION TOWARD SOVIETS, SEES NO PROSPECT OF DISLODGING THEM AND CUBANS FROM ANGOLA. USHER WOULD NEVERTHELESS WELCOME KISSINGER VISIT TO AFRICA AS DEMONSTRATION THAT USG CONTINUES TO CARE KBOUT WHAT HAPPENS ON THIS CONTINENT. EMBASSY BELIEVES ANGLOAN AFFAIR MAY LEAD GOIC TO EARLY RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH USSR.

2. AMBASSADOR CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER ARSENE USHER ASSOUAN ON FEBRUARY 17 TO DISCUSS BASIS FOR GOIC'S ANNOUNCEMENT FEBRUARY 12 OF RECOGNITION OF MPLA AS GOVERNMENT OF PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA.

3. USHER WENT RIGHT TO THE POINT. GOIC HAD HAD TO RETHINK ITS POSITION IN LIGHT OF FAILURE OF WEST IN GENERAL AND USG IN PARTICULAR TO MAINTAIN SUPPORT TO FNLA/UNITA AND TO EXPAND IT TO LEVEL ESSENTIAL TO OFFSET SOVIET/CUBAN SUPPORT TO MPLA. THIS WAS GRAVE DISAPPOINTMENT TO GOIC AND TO OTHER MODERATES, PARTICULARLY AFTER "FOR THE FIRST TIME" (AND HE STRESSED THIS) MODERATES HAD STOOD TOGETHER SO FIRMLY IN ADDIS. USHER SAID IT IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL MATTERS TO COUNT ON THE DECLARED INTENTION OF THE USG TO UNDER-TAKE AN ACTION, SINCE IT CAN SUBSEQUENTLY BE REVERSED BY ACTION OF U.S. CONGRESS.

4. USHER, CLEARLY SPEAKING FOR PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY,
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ABIDJA 01606 181709Z

SAID THAT ANGOLAN SITUATION HAD GRAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR FUTURE OF AFRICA. THE SOVIET/CUBAN FOOTHOLD THREATENED TO SPREAD QUICKLY TO ZAIRE AND ZAMBIA. OF EVEN GREATER CONSEQUENCE WAS THE REAL POSSIBILITY THAT CUBAN TROOPS WOULD ADVANCE TOWARD AND INTO NAMIBIA, ENGAGE SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS AND HAVE THE ARDENT SUPPORT OF PARACTICALLY ALL THE REST OF AFRICAN (AND MUCH OF THE REST OF THE WORLD) FOR AN ACTION TO FREE NAMIBIA FROM ITS WHITE COLONIAL YOKE. ANYWESTERN COUNTER SUPPORT FOR SOUTH AFRICA WOULD CLEARLY BE UNWELCOME.

5. USHER ADDED OMINOUSLY THAT IN VIEW OF ALL THESE DEVELOPMENTS, GOIC WAS REASSESSING ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD USSR. THE CLEAR IMPLICATION WAS THAT RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH USSR MIGHT BE IN THE OFFING. (NOTE: GOIC BROKE WITH USSR IN 1969 OVER ALLEGED SOVIET ACTIVITY IN STIRRING UP IVORIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND, ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN MUCH TALK OF RESUMING RELATIONS, IT KEEPS BEING POSTPONED BECAUSE OF HOUPHOUET'S FUNDMENTAL MISTRUST OF COMMUNISTS.)

6. I ASKED USHER WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN MUCH COORDINATION AMOUNG MODERATES BEFORE GOIC TOOK ITS DECISION TO RECOGNIZE MPLA. HE MADE CLEAR THAT THERE HAD, NOTING THAT WITHIN TWO DAYS OF GOIC ACTION, MOST OF OTHER MODERATES HAD FOLLOWED SUIT.

7. I ASKED WHETHER GOIC HOPED NOW TO BE ABLE TO INFLUENCE MPLA TO REDUCE SOVIET/CUBAN PRESENCE IN ANGOLA. HE SAW LITTLE CHANCE OF THAT. MPLA HAD WON A TREMENDOUS VICTORY, WHICH IT WOULD WANT TO CONSOLIDATE. SOVIETS HAD ALSO HAD THEIR FIRST REAL SUCCESS IN AFRICA AND HAD ABSOLUTELY NO INCENTIVE TO LEAVE, WHAT WITH THE OTHEREXCITING PROSPECTIN IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

8. USHER CAME BACK TO QUESTION OF WHAT UNITED STATES' FUTURE ROLE WULD BE IN ALL OF THIS, PARTICULARLY IN THIS ELECTION YEAR. HE SAW LITTLE HOPE OF A POSITIVE, MEANINGFUL USG STANCE. NEVERTHELESS, HE STILL HOPED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER WOULD VIST AFRICA (AND, OF COURSE, IVORY COAST). DESPITE WHAT HE HAD SAID ABOUT USG'S WORD HAVING TO BE CONFIRMED BY CONGRESSIONAL ACTON, HE BELIVES UNITED STATES STANDS AS IMPORTANT POWER IN AFRICAN EYES AND AFRICANS NEED ASSURANCES--WHICH THEY HAVE NOT HAD RECENTLY--THAT UNITED STATES IS GENUINELY INTER-

CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 ABIDJA 01606 181709Z

ESTED IN POLITICAL ASPECTS OF AFRICA'S FUTURE.

9. COMMENT: USHER'S MESSAGE WAS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME AS ONE HE AND PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET HAVE BEEN EXPRESSING TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFELE AND TO ME OVER PAST COUPLE OF MONTHS, NAMELY, THAT U.S. PUT IN TOO LITTLE AND TOO LATE, AND THEREFORE IVORY COAST HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO RECOGNIZE MPLA. IN ADDITION, HOWEVER, HE LEFT ME WITH FEELING THAT TIMING OF GOIC'S DECISION TO RECOGNIZE MPLA WAS ESSENTIALLY "A BANDWAGON" MOVE; FOR ONCE, IVORY COAST WOULD NOT BE THE LAST TO JOIN (AS IT HAD OVER ISRAE IN 1973). FURTHERMORE, HE WAS OBVIOUSLY DEPRESSED OVER "DEFEAT" OF MODERATES ON THIS ISSUES. AND, FINALLY, HE STRONGLY IMPLIED THAT GOIC MIGHT HAVE TO SHIFT ITS STANCE ON USSR. THIS POT WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED, THEREFORE, TO SEE IVORY COAST RESUEM DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH USSR IN RELATIVELY NEAR FUTURE, AS A DIRECT CONSEQUENCE OF SOVIET "VICTORY" IN ANGOLA IN FACT OF WEST'S INADEQUEATE RESPONSE. SUCH ACTION WOULD NOT BE IN PIQUE BUT IN FEAR OF

ISOLATION. IT IS ALSO EASY TO CONCEIVE OF THIS LEADING AS
WELL TO DIPOLMATIC RELATIONS WITH PRC AS OFFSET TO SOVIETS.
SMITH

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RECOGNITION, SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ABIDJA01606
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760061-0815
From: ABIDJAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760242/aaaabjxy.tel
Line Count: 172
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 76 ABIDJAN 1527
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <11 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FUTHER BACKGROUND ON IVORY COAST RECOGNITION OF MPLA--TALK WITH FOREIGN MINISTER
TAGS: PFOR, IV, AO, UR, CU, MPLA, (USHER, ARSENE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006